

DHSS Announces Three More Coronavirus-Related Deaths Involving Residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill



Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill is a long-term care facility, operated by DHSS, in Smyrna.

NEW CASTLE (May 8, 2020) – The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is announcing three more deaths from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) involving residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI) in Smyrna.

Their deaths bring the total of residents or patients from DHSS' 24/7 facilities who have died to 10. Two of the three deaths are included in the total of 213 coronavirus-related deaths reported today by the Division of Public Health.

The additional deaths from DHCI involve a 78-year-old male resident who died May 1; an 82-year-old male resident who died May 5; and a 73-year-old male resident who died May 8. All three died at a Kent County hospital.

The previous deaths at DHSS' 24/7 facilities involved four female residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill, a male and a female patient at Delaware Psychiatric Center near New Castle, and a male resident of Governor Bacon Health Center in Delaware City.

"These heartbreaking losses show how infectious and lethal COVID-19 is, especially for seniors and individuals with serious chronic health conditions," said DHSS Secretary Dr.

Kara Odom Walker, a practicing family physician. “Our hearts go out to the families of the residents from Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill who have passed away and to the staff members who were dedicated to caring for them. We extend our thoughts and prayers to all of the families across our state who have lost loved ones to COVID-19, including those in long-term care facilities.”

This week, DHSS’ Division of Public Health announced universal voluntary testing in all long-term care facilities in Delaware for residents and staff. In addition, DHSS’ Division of Health Care Quality (DHCQ) is working with DHSS’ 24/7 facilities and private long-term care and other licensed facilities in the state to verify that there are strong screening, infection control and isolation measures in place at each facility, and if, not, to assist them in implementing stronger protocols. Finally, DHSS staff from the State Health Operations Center in Smyrna are working daily with the long-term facilities to make sure their staffing, personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing needs are met.

To learn more about Delaware’s coronavirus response, visit: de.gov/coronavirus

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The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of life of Delaware’s citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations.
